

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

No claims are being canceled, amended or added. Accordingly, claims 1-16, 18, 20-36, 38, and 40-48 remain pending in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

In the Office Action, all previously asserted prior art rejections were indicated as having been withdrawn, but new grounds of rejection had been made in view of newly found prior art. A review of the new grounds of rejection reveals that all of the previously asserted prior art rejections have been reasserted with the newly found prior art (Bhatt, U.S. Patent No. 6,799,184) replacing the previously relied upon Myllymaki reference.

In particular, claims 1-3, 7-16, 18, 20-23, 27-36, 38, 40-42, and 45-46 are now rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eck (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0129059) in view of Bhatt (U.S. Patent No. 6,799,184, claims 4-6, 24-26, 43-44, and 47-48 are rejected by the combination of Eck and Bhatt and further in view of Webber (U.S. Patent No. 6,418,400), Huang (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0147748), or De La Hueriga (U.S. Patent No. 6,516,321).

Concurrently with this Response, Applicants have file a Declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131. As stated in the Declaration, Applicants conceived of the claimed invention prior to the June 21, 2001, effective prior art date of Bhatt, and began diligently pursuing and completing the actual reduction to practice of the invention from a time prior to the June 21, 2001, effective prior art date of Bhatt. Accordingly, Bhatt is not prior art against this application. Applicant therefore requests that all of the rejections of the pending claims, each of which rely on Bhatt, be withdrawn.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 

FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Telephone: (202) 672-5485
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

William T. Ellis
Registration No. 26,874

Marc K. Weinstein
Registration No. 43,250

Customer Number: 22428

Attorneys for Applicants